

Homeland Security Notifies Rep. Gutierrez That Humanitarian Visa Will Be

Granted to Soldier's Wife and Child Stuck in Mexico

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(Washington, DC) – Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-IL) learned today that a humanitarian visa request for Spc. Hector Nunez would be granted so that his wife and young child can return to Chicago before Christmas. Because of draconian restrictions on legal immigration and bad advice from an immigration lawyer, the Nunez family has been separated and Spc. Nunez was worried that his imminent deployment to Afghanistan would happen before he secured a visa for his wife and one-year old son who requires specialized medical care.

"I had the honor of telling Hector that his Christmas wish had been granted," said Rep. Gutierrez who called Spc. Nunez five minutes after his Congressional office received word this afternoon that the visa request had been approved. "Getting a positive resolution, and so quickly, is truly a Christmas miracle. I'm so happy for the Nunez family and pleased that

Homeland Security acted to correct a great injustice."

There are still logistical and bureaucratic details to be worked out, including the delivery of the visa to Nunez' wife, Rosa, who is currently in Mexico with the couple's son, Jason. But the family can begin making travel plans to be reunited in Chicago and the fear that Spc. would redeploy to Afghanistan without having secured his family's safety has been averted. Jason, who suffers from a brain condition, can also resume treatment in the U.S. shortly.

"This is great news on the eve of Christmas and I am thankful to Secretary," said Rep. Gutierrez who held a press conference with Spc. Nunez in Chicago on December 6 and spoke personally to Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano two days later.

"We should be more respectful of our soldiers and not try to deport their families while they are overseas protecting our country," Rep. Gutierrez said. "In this case, we got good news just in time for Christmas, but people fall through the cracks of our overly restrictive and incredibly out-of-date immigration system all the time."

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